

# State Governmental Public Health System Baseline Report

*March 2013 Executive Summary*

## Introduction

The State Governmental Public Health System Baseline Report was developed by the Public Health Evaluation Committee to fulfill its responsibility to collect and report baseline information for organizational capacity and public health service delivery based on the Iowa Public Health Standards. This baseline report details the findings of a survey sent to all division directors and bureau chiefs of the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH). Surveys were completed by 100% of invited participants.

## Significant Findings

Public health administration: Iowa Administrative Code describes how IDPH will carry out those activities mandated by law. When asked whether or not administrative rules have been reviewed in the last five years, 82.6% of respondents said they had. A majority (70.8%) of respondents also indicated that they obtain stakeholder input prior to seeking formal approval of a new rule.

Partnerships in state government: To carry out its mission to promote and protect the health of Iowans, IDPH partners with twenty-four state agencies. The agencies the department most frequently partners with include: Iowa Department of Human Services, state universities, Iowa Department of Education, State Hygienic Laboratory, and Department on Aging.

Partnerships with local agencies/organizations: IDPH also partners with local governmental and non-governmental agencies/organizations. The department engages with these partners by exchanging information; serving together on committees, work groups, or advisory bodies; working together on specific activities or projects; and providing financial resources through contracts. The report details the department's relationship with 29 types of local agencies/organizations.

Evaluation of public health programs and services: Slightly more than half of the respondents (54.2%) indicated that their bureau had developed goals and objectives for all of the public health programs and services it provides. Performance measures were most likely to have been identified for grant-funded programs and services.

Public health data: The majority of bureaus (18/24) manage a data collection system to either monitor health indicators or report service provision. Half of bureaus (9/18) evaluate response times for issues identified with state-managed data collection systems. The majority of bureaus (14/18) obtain user feedback or stakeholder input to improve data collection systems.

*Educating Iowans about public health services:* IDPH educates people about public health services through a variety of mechanisms. The top five ways include the IDPH website, email distribution lists, brochures, coalition meetings, and meetings with health care providers.

*Service Delivery:* IDPH provides some public health services directly and other services through written agreement with another provider. The report identifies these services as follows: immunizations; screening for diseases/conditions; registry maintenance; disease treatment services; maternal and child health services; other health services; data collection; epidemiology/surveillance activities; population-based primary prevention services; regulation, inspection, and/or licensing activities; professional licensure; environmental health activities; other public health activities; and access to health care services.

*Quality improvement:* Formal quality improvement activities are occurring in specific programs or functional areas in 13 out of 24 bureaus. Another 10 bureaus reported that quality improvement activities are informal or ad hoc. One bureau reported no current involvement with quality improvement activities. No bureau has a formal quality improvement program bureau-wide.

*Iowa Public Health Standards:* Only 7 of 23 respondents indicated that their bureau had initiated activities related to the Iowa Public Health Standards. Only 6 of 23 respondents have a process in place to orient new staff to the Iowa Public Health Standards.

## Next Steps

The Public Health Evaluation Committee will reassess the state governmental public health system on a regular basis. To read the report in its entirety visit <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/mphi/>.